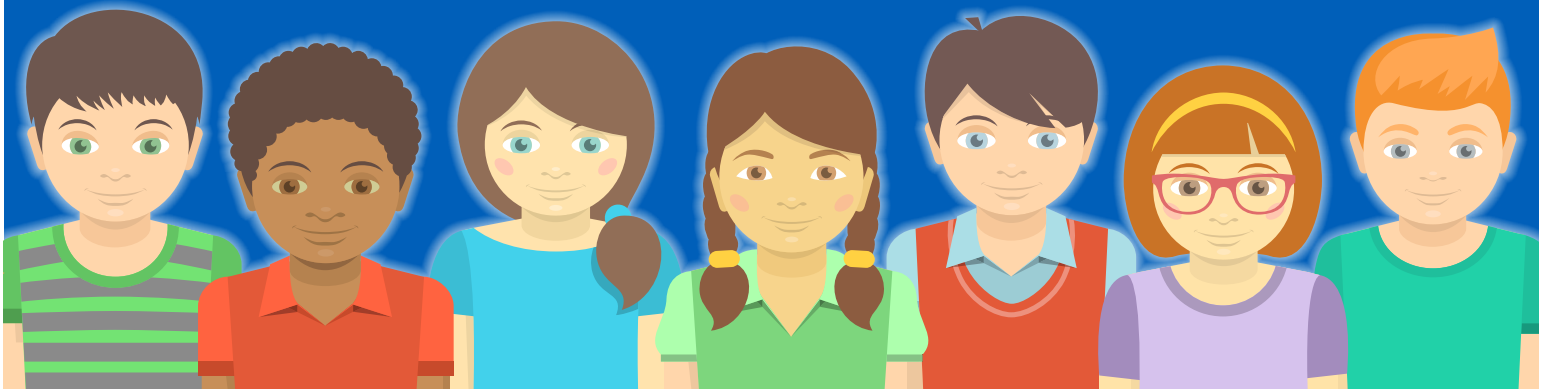




**2022-23
SCHOOL YEAR**



Children's Mercy Hospital & Blue Valley School District Social Work Partnership



Children's Mercy Hospital and Blue Valley Schools began a partnership in 2017 to place social workers in the schools. The success of the program has allowed for expansion from an original team of 19 social workers to the current team of 31. A full-time social worker is available in each building in the district.



The social workers have a mental health focus and serve as a bridge for supporting children in school, home and community. The goal of the program is to help students feel safe and supported at school. Team members may see students individually, who really benefit from having a specialized, trusted adult to support their social-emotional well-being. Staff work with parents to connect them with needed community resources or mental health services. Teachers rely on them to help students who are having a difficult day, or to provide solutions to accommodate students during everyday instruction.

As we face growing concerns over mental health challenges in youth, families have expressed frustration about the challenges they face accessing and understanding the mental health system. In an effort to address this and to maximize effective use of community resources, a team goal for the 2022-23 school year was a focus on supporting parents in the process of understanding the community mental health system, accessing mental health services and coordination of services between family, school and outside providers. The team's strategy and focus was to partner with and empower parents to be strong advocates for their children; as well as to facilitate communication and collaboration between parents/guardians, in-school supports and outside service providers. With the support and guidance of the social worker 60% of families were able to successfully follow through on referrals and access services.

Areas of support include: Crisis Intervention, Emotional Support, Behavioral Support, Goal Setting and Achievement, Advocacy, Resources and Referrals, Support Groups

- Top reasons for referral to the social worker:
- 1 Anxiety/Depression
 - 2 Peer/Social Concerns
 - 3 Behavior Issues
 - 4 Family Issues
 - 5 ADHD and other Mental Health Concerns

In 2022-23 the Children's Mercy social workers supported

1,607
students

with more than

29,425
hours of service

Children's Mercy social workers completed

145

Suicide Risk Assessments

94%

Goals Completed or Progressing

In an end of the year survey of Blue Valley faculty and staff, staff reported:

94% Would call the social worker in a crisis situation with a student

93% The social worker helped them with at least one of their students

96% Overall Satisfaction

What teachers are saying about services:



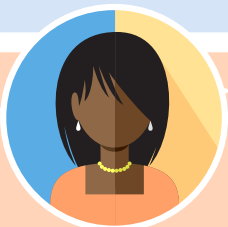
The Children's Mercy social worker is my go-to person in a crisis situation. A student arrived at my classroom upset and making concerning comments that were more than I knew how to deal with as a teacher. The social worker was here within seconds and completely attentive to the student and their situation, immediately connecting with the student to ensure their safety. She worked with the parent to get the student into a facility that could offer mental health treatment for the child and help for the family. I would never be able to do my job without her by my side. The problem was larger than the classroom and her support for the student made all the difference.



It seems every year there are more and more children with mental health and emotional struggles, and more challenging behaviors. The Children's Mercy social worker helped out in more situations than I can even remember to help deescalate a student so that I could continue teaching. She has been a trusted resource for many of these students and took the time to meet with these children on a regular basis to help them learn ways to self-regulate and manage their anxiety. She also gave me suggestions, which helped me learn ways to support and de-escalate students if I am unable to receive assistance.



Our Children's Mercy Social Worker is a wealth of knowledge and one of our greatest supports on campus. As a coach as well as an educator, the social worker was an important part of providing resources for players in our basketball program this season by mentoring student-athletes on mental resiliency exercises. She did great work behind the scenes and with discretion to assist our students.



The social worker's extensive knowledge of mental health is a critical resource our counseling department utilizes nearly every day. She works hand in hand with our counseling team, school psychologist, and building administration and it's a beautiful thing!

Future Initiatives

Social Work Role Engagement

- The nature of a school-based program means each Children's Mercy Social Worker's role in their school is grown from the standard program foundation to adapt to unique school needs. This adaptability is a keystone to the program and ensures a nimble and skillful staff. During the 2023-2024 school year, the program will work on ways to enhance opportunities to aid staff in growth of additional skills through increased cross staff engagement and support.

Increasing Support for Staff

- During the 2023-2024 school year, the school based social work team will work to enable a broad understanding of the role of the social worker in the school through early and frequent engagement with key staff.